

About Derek

Derek Peterson is the founder and Principal Director of the International Institute for Student Support (IISS), which has developed the Student Support Card™, a comprehensive program that measures a student's "other side of the report card". The program's integrative approach uses a consilience model for optimal youth development as it relates to student achievement, civility, and overall well-being. Derek's work guides local, state, national, and international governing boards, policy makers, and program leaders to measure the impact of their efforts upon the developmental ecology of youth. This includes working with the National School Boards Association to increase caring and connection in schools.



Since 1994, Derek has delivered more than two thousand presentations on youth development around the world, engaging and supporting individuals, families, schools, and communities. More than 310,000 copies of his books in the "Helping Kids Succeed" series are in print. In Alaska, Derek has been recognized as the "Prevention Professional of the Year" and "Educator of the Year". He is also an Associate with the International Institute for Children's Rights and Development in Victoria, Canada, and guides efforts to measure the effectiveness of programs that work to support the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Derek works with numerous communities and school districts throughout the US, Canada, and the world, with current partners and projects in Minnesota, Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, California, Arizona, Tennessee, Illinois, Nigeria, Ghana, and La Frontera (the US/Mexican border region).

If your school district or organization is interested in hosting Phlight Club™ and other Student Support Card™ program activities, please contact:

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Youth-centered events sponsored by the
 **International Institute
for Student Support**
Home of the Student Support Card™

What Is Phlight Club?

Phlight Club™ is a youth leadership and empowerment EXPERIENCE.

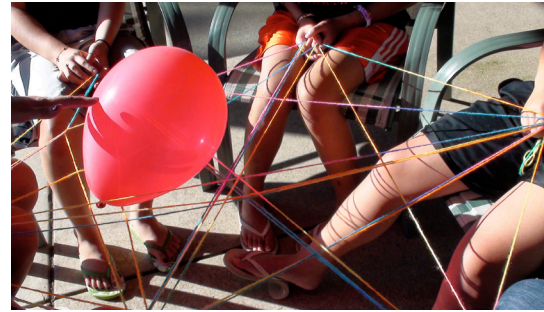
In partnership with the International Institute for Student Support, Phlight Club brings together at 30-60 of the school district or regional student leaders once or more each year. The students come together to learn to identify and measure their web of support and how they can self-activate it. They learn about the power of the full-spectrum approach to youth development and it's seven colors. They practice working together to solve problems using their heads, hands, and hearts. They solve these problems while keeping each other safe, focused, respected and involved.

Phlight Club is about action, interspersed with short opportunities for “lessons” about school, life, and friendships. Commonly, each community in the district takes a turn at hosting the gathering. The activity is organized and chaperoned by adults from the community, and staff and parents from around the district. Each site sets up one or two community nights during the event, where the youth do presentations to the whole community to teach what they have learned and to thank them for their support. We encourage adults to come and join in some of the Club activities along side the teens.

We carefully review each application to make sure that we get a cross section of the students from throughout the district. Unfortunately, we can't bring everyone who applies. If your

“I’ve lived here for 25 years, and I have never seen a school activity where ALL of the students are involved. This is AWESOME.”

- Teacher’s Aide



*“The time went by so fast.
3 1/2 days felt like one. I want
more days!!”*

- Minto Student



*“This is the best leadership
experience I have ever
attended.”*

- Nulato Student

*I am so lucky! I get to come
to them all!”*

- Kaltag Student

Raising Resiliency — Learning, Living, and Connecting

Resiliency is almost guaranteed when a teen has a web of support. This web is made of protective factors that guide youth to make good decisions and grow to be healthy and successful. This protection is found within the complete spectrum of each youth's developmental ecology.

Phlight Club concentrates on building and sustaining a web for all students, both inside and outside of the classroom. Strong webs of support help our kids to succeed, now and long into the future.

More than fifty years of national research has proven that the tighter the web teenagers have, the more likely they will succeed in school, help others, and avoid alcohol and drugs. "Integrative Youth Development" uses know the seven metrics (areas of impact represented by the seven colors) that make strong children and youth. We know what to do.

The basic wisdom of the resiliency research is that adults must focus on the positive attributes that we want for our children. We focus on growing something, not stopping something. When adults guide and support students to build the skills and values necessary to stay connected to their web, then many of the problems that we currently focus upon will be eliminated or significantly reduced. The home, family, school, and community are critical in building resiliency in students.

"My involvement with Phlight Club has given me both personal and professional connections in life that I can carry with me life-long. That is what we, the many counselors, district support staff, chaperones, and the principals and schools that support this program, also want to instill in our students. We want them to make connections, build webs of support anchored by caring adults in their lives, build positive relationships with their anchors and with their peers, and use this program as a "spring board" to have successful lives."

- School Counselor

What We Know

The development of resiliency involves all potential anchors in discovering and sharing how to best build the webs of support that youth need. The design of this project is built on the following:

All students need a rich web of support.

While it is crucial to pay special attention to those youth who have fewer strings in their web, all young people can use more.

Every adult can play a role in building webs.

Integrative Youth Development requires consistent efforts across a community.

Building webs is an ongoing and complex process.

A web of support is necessary from early childhood through high school and beyond.

Relationships with Anchors are the foundation.

Strong relationships between adults and young people are the building blocks of youth development. Integrative Youth Development requires the presence of at least five caring, supportive adults and peers in each student's life.

Consistent messages through social norms.

Youth Development requires consistent, positive, and clear messages about high expectations and what is important.

Redundancy.

To sustain the web, students need to hear connecting messages and feel regular (almost constant) support from the adults who anchor their web.

Catchers of Dreams

Phlight Club activities are based on a full-color spectrum approach involved seven factors, or metrics:

Red (Rule of Five) –The foundation for a personal village for each youth by five caring adults (or more,) having high expectations and providing opportunities, teaching skills, and celebrating relative best in appropriate ways.

Orange (Tangible Strings) – Measurable supports provided through the anchors that shape the home, school, and community environment of each youth.

Yellow (Intangible Strings) – Important, yet difficult to measure, beliefs, values, and behaviors that are being taught to and caught by the youth.

Green (Innate Resiliency/Growing the Balloon) –These DNA based characteristics and talents that increase the likelihood that the youth will remain connected to any web that they are given.

Blue (Problem Reduction) – Decreasing or eliminating the conditions, actions, and attitudes that erode the supports being created by the adult anchors.

Indigo (Caring for the Carers) – Supporting those who anchor the web so they do not drop out of their lives even when circumstances in their own lives change.

Violet (Social Norms) – The climate and culture of the social environment (home, school, and/or community) that have been accepted or agreed upon by a critical number of adults.

Phlight Club is a multi-day event of non-stop learning, connecting, and working!



Debriefing the activity

After each activity we ask the participants to think about how the problem was solved, what they learned from the experience, and what they will build upon for next time.



Doing the lessons

Through activities, lessons, Student Support Card surveys, and discussions, we teach “What Teens Need to Succeed!”



Protecting the Head & Heart

Phlight Club is very physical. Teens are literally lifting their classmates high over their heads, passing them over, through or around obstacles. Always being careful to protect their safety and dignity.